

people of our State—bills like the Oregon Equality Act, which banned discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and the Oregon Family Fairness Act, which created domestic partnerships for same-sex couples. We established a rainy-day fund to help guard Oregon against sudden economic downturns and updated the Oregon Bottle Bill for the first time since it was passed in 1971 in order to add water bottles to the list of containers with mandatory deposits.

Working together, we made those 2 years some of the most productive in the history of our State. But in 2009, we each set off on new chapters of our lives and our careers—me to serve in the U.S. Senate and Governor Brown to serve for two terms as Oregon's secretary of state, where she made expanding the right of every Oregonian to vote and breaking down the barriers to registration her top priority. As secretary of state, Governor Brown implemented online voter registration, which 87,000 Oregonians availed themselves of within the first year of its enactment. She pushed the use of tablets and iPads to ensure our elections were increasingly accessible to every Oregonian. And because of her efforts, our State became the first to use tablets to help voters with disabilities actually mark their ballots, a practice which has since caught on across the country. And she crafted and pushed for passage of the "motor voter" program to automatically register voters when they get a driver's license that she would actually go on to sign into law and implement once she became Governor.

Like her time in the legislature, Governor Brown distinguished her tenure as secretary of state by her work to bring fairness and opportunity to our State. And that continued into the Governor's mansion where she always strives to put the best interests of Oregonians first, especially working families. Under her watch, Governor Brown oversaw historic investments in education with the Students Success Act. She signed a transformative 10-year, \$5.3 billion package to improve our roads and highways, while creating more pedestrian- and bike-friendly communities.?? She expanded the Oregon Health Plan so that every child and 94 percent of all adults in our State have some form of health coverage today. Her budget plan included some of the most ambitious goals in the country for taking on climate chaos by reducing carbon emissions and moving to 100 percent clean energy sources. And, of course, Governor Brown saw our State through the dark and difficult days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her career in public service has been defined by working to improve our State and help lift up families everywhere. And it is important to remember that, time and again, she had to do so while breaking down one barrier after another. She was the first woman to serve as our senate majority leader, the first openly LGBTQ+ person elect-

ed as a secretary of state in the country, and then the first as Governor. It takes immense courage to be the first at anything—to be a pioneer. And it is her courage which has made Governor Brown such an inspiration to so many in Oregon and across the Nation who have questioned their own place in the world and seeking their own path in life.

As she prepares to transition into the next phase of her life, I am going to miss having Governor Brown there in Mahonia Hall, leading our State through good times and bad. I am going to miss the regular phone calls that we have shared, almost every month, for nearly 8 years. But I know that this is far from the end. I know that, even as she leaves office, Governor Brown will continue to make important and meaningful contributions to the lives of her fellow Oregonians. And I, for one, cannot wait to see what she decides to do next.●

TRIBUTE TO PETER COURTNEY

● Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, when the Oregon Legislature comes into session on January 9, it will embark on a new era because, for the first time in 38 years, it will convene without Oregon's longest serving legislator and longest serving senate president, Peter Courtney, among its ranks.

Since the day he stepped off that greyhound bus in Salem, back in 1969, Peter has been a captivating presence in Oregon politics. Through 6 years on the Salem City Council, 7 terms in the Oregon House and 12 in the senate—10 of them as senate president—Peter has sought to not only make government work by pushing to make the legislature meet yearly rather than once every 2 years, but to work on behalf of the people of our State. And he has certainly been a tireless advocate for his community, exemplified by his support for the Salem YMCA he loved so much and once called "home" for 2 years and through this year's groundbreaking on the 34-unit which will serve veterans in need of affordable housing.

As senate president, Peter helped usher a number of landmark bills on everything from housing, to healthcare, to jobs. Among them are the rainy-day fund that I worked with him to establish in order to safeguard our State from sudden economic downturns; the Healthy Kids Act which provided health insurance to 90,000 uninsured children and 30,000 low-income adults; and through the Housing Opportunity Bill which created a new trust fund to increase affordable rental housing development, help more Oregonians become homeowners, prevent homelessness, and maintain and expand the network of community-based nonprofit housing providers.

But there is no question that, of all the issues he has worked on over the years, mental health care is that Peter is most passionate about. Peter has long been recognized throughout Or-

egon as a champion for providing mental health services to those who need it. This passion began when, visiting the Oregon State Hospital back in 2004, the same hospital where "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" was filmed, Peter and a group of local leaders discovered the unclaimed cremated remains of more than 3,500 Oregonian patients sitting in a neglected storage room in corroding copper canisters. Finding those remains and the lack of care with which they were treated set Peter off on a personal mission to ensure that Oregonians suffering from mental illnesses get the care they need and that they are treated with dignity and respect. He led the charge to replace that old State hospital with a new modern facility that also had a boost in staffing so patients could get the care they need. He pushed through a mental health parity bill in 2005 which said that insurance companies had to cover mental health treatment the same as they did physical health treatment. And Peter was also the driving force for successfully increasing our State's cigarette tax and dedicating the extra funding it generates to mental health treatment.

And if there is a second issue that Peter is most passionate about, it would probably have to be preparing our State for a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. He once gave each Democrat in the House a small piece of marble with an engraved image of the State capitol once repairs were finished after the damage caused by the 1993 Scotts Mill earthquake as symbol of the importance of this issue. That commitment to safety led Peter to successfully shepherd 12 seismic safety measures into law. And schools and emergency services facilities across Oregon are now safer in the event of an earthquake thanks to the Seismic Rehabilitation Grant Program that he created.

It is hard to imagine what Oregon State politics is going to look like, starting in just a few weeks, without Peter Courtney running the State senate. But as work continues on a multiyear project to retrofit and prepare our capitol in Salem for an inevitable and long overdue earthquake in the Cascadia Subduction Zone, I know that Peter's legacy and his work on so many important issues will continue to touch the lives of Oregonians for a long time to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BOB STOLL

● Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, today I would like to recognize Robert Stoll, a dear friend, brilliant legal mind, and a steadfast champion for the people of Oregon who just celebrated his 80th birthday on December 16, 2022. Adlai Stevenson once said, "It is not the years in your life but the life in your years." Well, Bob has certainly crammed a lot of life into his 80 years on this planet.

A dabbler in journalism as a publisher of the University of Wisconsin

(Madison) student newspaper, Bob got a firsthand view of history on a summer trip to Europe in 1963. After embracing the brazen courage of youth to request press credentials from Press Secretary Pierre Salinger, he got to stand 20 feet behind John F. Kennedy as the President declared to Germany and the world “Ich bin ein Berliner,” no doubt sparking a lifelong passion for Democratic politics.

A world traveler, Bob adores spending time in Rome, Italy—his second favorite city behind Portland. On their first trip to the city back in 1983, Bob's wife Barre became so ill, she had to undergo emergency surgery. Spending time in that Roman hospital, surrounded by the constant traffic of generous and caring visitors, the two fell in love with the city and the Italian people, wanting to spend as much time there as they could.

A self-described “frustrated architect,” Bob has been involved in renovating and restoring a number of historic buildings around Portland, including the former Portland police headquarters that was originally built in 1912 and which is where the law firm he founded more than 40 years ago, Stoll Berne, can be found.

It is through that firm that Bob has worked tirelessly, over the course of his long and distinguished legal career, to help others. He has tried over 150 cases—both jury and nonjury cases—in State and Federal courts that cover nearly the entire gamut of criminal and civil law.

But the majority of Bob's cases were focused on large complex financial litigation like securities, antitrust, and class actions in which he fought time and again on behalf of small investors and the less fortunate. All you have to do is look at the class-action suit against Exxon Mobile Corp after the 1989 grounding of the Exxon Valdez supertanker in Alaska's Prince William Sound that resulted in an 11-million-gallon oil spill. Bob led the Oregon State trial team and served on the committee that organized suits filed by more than 32,000 plaintiffs like small business and fisherman effected by the spill.

Bob also stood up for residents of the Fairview Hospital and Training Center when the hospital ignored a statute to continue institutionalizing patients past the age of 18 without reason. He also took up the case of State hospital patients who were left with no financial resources upon release, after the State laid claim to all their Social Security benefits. A former associate justice of Oregon's State supreme court once described Bob in a news article as “a well-grounded, common-sensical legal expert, to the point where people as high up in our system as the governor seek him out for personal counsel on complicated legal issues and political matters.”

And, as the long-time vice chair of Oregon's Democratic Party who got his start in politics running Lyndon John-

son's 1964 Presidential campaign in the State, Bob has indeed been an incredible source of political counsel and leadership to so many. Among his many achievements on behalf of the Democratic Party is launch of the informal Oregon Progressives group that transformed Oregon politics by building out civic engagement infrastructure like robust voter files and supported new organizations that brought stakeholders together around a shared agenda, especially on things like ballot measures.

But Bob's contributions to our State and to our country have gone far beyond his legal career and his political work. A strong believer in giving back to the community, Bob has regularly provided legal services to poor and minority communities, helped mentor “at risk” children, and served on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's first Consumer Advisory Board, where he championed ordinary Americans dealing with the powerful financial services industry.

On top of all that, he has also poured himself into the work of finding solutions to the homelessness crisis that has plagued our State, especially Portland. He has helped raise the financing for the construction of temporary transition shelters, like Harbor for Hope's River District Navigation Center under the Broadway Bridge, and inspired Portland State University's Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative to conduct a far more accurate and in-depth report on the scale of the homelessness crisis over a single year. Bob's most visible work in this area, though, is as a board member of Here Together, a coalition of service providers, business leaders, elected officials, leaders from communities of color and faith, and community advocates who all refuse to believe that homelessness in our community is an unsolvable problem. In this role, Bob helped craft and pass a regional supportive housing services ballot measure which targets the root causes of the problem through a dedicated funding source to pay for mental health, addiction and recovery services, case management, housing supports, and other proven solutions to the complex challenge of chronic homelessness.

The website for his firm, Stoll Berne, has this to say about Bob: “If our lives are only half as full as Robert's has been, we will all feel as though we have lived a life and a half.” As we look back on and celebrate Bob Stoll's 80th birthday, I cannot think of anything more fitting to describe this great legal and political son of the Beaver State. And I join all those who have paid tribute and have sent their affections and best wishes in honor of this special occasion.●

TRIBUTE TO SILAS BROWN IV AND RECOGNIZING JONES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

● Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I rise to honor and commend Mr. Silas

Brown and the teachers, faculty, and staff at Jones Elementary School in Bremen, GA. This year, the U.S. Department of Education recognized Jones Elementary School as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2022. The National Blue Ribbon award honors schools for overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student groups, demonstrating that all students have opportunities to achieve their maximum potential. Only six Georgia schools won this prestigious award in 2022, demonstrating the unique achievements of Mr. Brown and the entire team at Jones Elementary School.

Jones Elementary School's curriculum is rooted in fundamental areas of education, introducing students at early ages to reading, writing, art, music, physical education, and STEM and preparing our next generation to become leaders in our communities and country.

As Georgia's U.S. Senator, it is my honor to commend Principal Silas Brown and Jones Elementary School for this distinguished honor.●

TRIBUTE TO KORNISHA MCGILL BROWN

● Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I rise to honor and commend a great champion for families in Georgia and nationwide, Kornisha McGill Brown, an esteemed member of the Columbus, GA, community, serves as the 27th national president of Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated, an organization committed to nurturing future leaders in the Black community. Born and raised in Georgia, Ms. McGill Brown has dedicated her personal and professional life to supporting children and families across the State, working as a public school educator, philanthropist, and youth professional development leader over the course of her career.

She also dedicates her time to several service organizations in her community, including serving on the Board of for the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley and as a member of the Columbus chapter of The Links, Incorporated. Ms. McGill Brown is a graduate of Spelman College and the University of Georgia, where she earned her bachelor of arts in political science and masters of education degrees, respectively.

As Georgia's U.S. Senator, it is my honor to recognize Kornisha McGill Brown for her steadfast commitment to our Nation's youth and her lifetime of service.●

TRIBUTE TO MANDY CARTER

● Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I rise to honor and commend Mandy Carter, a first-grade teacher at Waynesboro Primary School in Burke County. Ms. Carter has spent the last two decades enriching the lives of young students in Georgia. She has worked as a preschool, kindergarten, first grade,